

BOROUGH OF MONTGOMERY

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE

YEAR 1958



Council of the Borough of Montgomery

Councillor R. W. P. Humphreys, (Mayor)

Alderman Reg. Jones

Alderman J. D. K. Lloyd

Councillors W. H. Gornall, G. W. Jellings,

E. L. Griffiths, D. P. Davies and R. B. Jones

Town Clerk - P. E. Jones

Medical Officer of Health - I. B. Millar, M.D., B.Ch., B.A.O.,
D.P.H.

Surveyor and Public Health Inspector - F. Hunt to 31st May

H. J. Sleigh from 1st June.

To the Montgomery Borough Council:

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I have pleasure in submitting my Annual Report for the year 1958.

It follows the scheme and deals with the subjects required by the Ministry of Health.

The statistics are well-nigh ideal except of course for the low population figure already mentioned in previous reports.

In the section of this report dealing with the sanitary circumstances of the area the water supply is described as adequate. The forthcoming changes in responsibility for water supplies have prompted me to make the following comments on the subject of fluoridation.

In areas such as Welshpool, Llanfyllin, Forden and Montgomery the amounts of naturally-occurring fluorides in the drinking waters are likely to be low. At least it can be said that where tests have been made in these areas, low or negligible amounts, far below those necessary to prevent tooth decay, have been found. These deficiencies are not peculiar to this area but their effect is aggravated by several factors such as the difficulty in obtaining dental staff and the indifference of parents.

A study of the natural order of things reveals this answer which awaits the exploitation of mankind. Indeed 33 million people in 1600 American communities were already last year drinking water to which fluorides had been added and were thus reaping the benefits of such exploitation. This is of course an addition to the many communities drinking waters comparatively rich in natural fluorides and having in consequence excellent teeth. The general health statistics of such communities are similar to those having no fluorides except for the fact that their dental health is so good. When it is realised that 80-90% of the population suffer from dental decay, the possibilities of improvement are enormous and it is hard to envisage a better way of effecting this improvement than by emulating the exemplary pattern already known to exist in nature. This can be achieved by a simple adjustment of the amount of fluorides in the drinking water so as to resemble those areas where a sufficiency of fluorides already exists. It is true that you will be handing over the responsibility for your water supply to a County Water Board so that the pertinence of these remarks might appear to be diminished, but your representatives on that Board may well be able to pursue this idea and at least they may be able to ensure that a place is secured for it when new projects are being developed. A more general sanction may be given in due course for the installation of fluoridation equipment in all the water supplies that need it.

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The local health services under Part III of the National Health Service Act, 1946 continued to operate satisfactorily during the year. I have pleasure in reporting a good response to the B.C.G. (Bacilli Calmette-Guerin) Vaccination Scheme against tuberculosis. Although Montgomeryshire has shared in the general decline of tuberculosis mortality, a decline has not been so conspicuous in respect of the notification of new cases. The County Medical Officer in his 1958 Annual Report ascribes the reduction in non-pulmonary cases to the improvement of milk production. The B.C.G. vaccine is in my opinion likely to operate as effectively in reducing the number of pulmonary cases. The steady progress in connection with poliomyelitis vaccination is also described.

It remains for me to express my sincere thanks to you Mr. Mayor and fellow members of the Council for your friendly support at all times and I must also record my thanks to the Public Health Inspector for his assistance in the preparation of this report as in other matters throughout the year.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

I. B. MILLAR
Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A

Area of district - 3390 acres.
Estimated Mid Year population - 870.
Number of Inhabited Houses - 315 (according to rate books)
Rateable value at 31/12/58 - £5,696.
Sum represented by a penny rate - £22. 2. 1.

VITAL STATISTICS.

<u>Live Births:</u>	Legitimate	Illegitimate
	Male 8	
	Female 8	NIL
	<u>16</u>	

Note: Half of these births (5 male, 3 female) were registered in the borough, the other half elsewhere.

Crude Birth Rate: 18.4 per 1,000 population.

Crude Birth Rate for Montgomeryshire in 1958 : 16.0
Crude Birth Rate for Wales in 1958 : 16.2

Montgomeryshire Birth Rate (after correction for age and sex distribution)
: 20.23 per 1,000 population.
England and Wales Birth Rate in 1958 : 16.4 (provisional)

Still Births : NIL.

Infant Deaths : NIL

All Infant Mortality components : NIL

<u>Deaths:</u> All causes :	Male 8
	Female <u>3</u>
	<u>11</u>

Crude Death Rate: 12.6 per 1,000 population.

Montgomeryshire Crude Death Rate in 1958 : 12.6
Wales Death Rate, 1958 : 12.5
Montgomery Death Rate (after correction for age and sex distribution) : 10.46
England and Wales Death Rate in 1958 : 11.7 (provisional)

Causes of Death:

	Age Groups	Male	Female	Total
Cancer of Lung	50-60	1		1
Cancer of Uterus	60-70		1	1
Other Cancer	80-90	1		1
Vascular lesions	70-80		1*	1
of nervous system	80-90		1	1
Coronary disease	60-70	2		2
	70-80	2		2
Other heart disease	90-100	1		1
Nephritis	70-80	1		1
Total		8	3	11

Note: The average age at death was 73 years.

* This death was partly due to cancer of the colon.

Total deaths in which cancer played a part : 4.

Other multiple causes were diabetes with the cancer of uterus, and uraemia and bronchopneumonia in the case of other cancer.

SECTION C SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

- (1) WATER - During an abnormally dry season there was no shortage and it was not necessary to impose restrictions of any kind. One house was connected to the mains.
- (2) (a) DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE - With the exception of Tanymur Housing Estate which has a satisfactory Sewage Disposal Plant the effluent from the whole town discharges untreated into an open ditch. These conditions have existed for 50 years or more and each year the pollution is increased by more sewage being discharged. Progress on the plans for a sewage works is very slow.

(b) RIVER AND STREAMS - Every effort is made to prevent pollution other than that mentioned above. In all cases of modernisation of property outside the town a suitable septic tank is installed.
- (3) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION - No action was taken by the Authority to enforce the substitution of pail closets by water closets because of ditch pollution. Two properties were converted by owners.
- (4) PUBLIC CLEANSING - Refuse and night soil are collected fortnightly by contract. The practice of collecting refuse in an open lorry is very bad but the size of the contract does not justify any contractor purchasing a proper vehicle. Refuse is tipped on the Council's own land approximately a mile from the town.
- (5) SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA - The District has been inspected both systematically and on complaint. It has not been necessary to take any formal action to remedy nuisances.
- (6) SHOPS AND OFFICES - All shops and offices have been inspected. No action was necessary.
- (7) CAMPING - No sites were in use for camping but in view of the possibility of parts of the district being used for this the Council decided to adopt Byelaws as to Tents, Vans and Sheds.
- (8) SMOKE ABATEMENT - No nuisance from smoke occurred during the year.
- (9) SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS - There are none in the District.
- (10) VERMIN - No cases of insect infestation were encountered during the year. A Rodent Officer is shared with Forden Rural District Council, Welshpool Borough and Llanfyllin Rural District Council. During the year he gave regular treatment at the refuse tip and treated the Council's Sewers. In addition he made inspections of 28 premises and treated 16 of them.

SECTION D HOUSING

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLINGS DURING THE YEAR

- | | |
|--|-----|
| (1) (a) Total number of houses inspected for housing defects under the Public Health or Housing Acts | 8 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | 14 |
| (2) (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 and 1932 | NIL |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | NIL |
| (3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | NIL |
| (4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those under sub-head (3)) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | 3 |

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES - Number of dwellings rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers

3

3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS -

- | | |
|---|------------|
| (a) <u>PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 9, 10 & 16 of the HOUSING ACT, 1936</u>
Number of houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | NIL |
| (b) <u>PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS</u>
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | NIL |
| (c) <u>PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 11 & 13 of the HOUSING ACT, 1936</u>
(1) Number of houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made
(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | NIL
NIL |
| (d) <u>PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 12 of the HOUSING ACT, 1936</u>
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or underground room having been made fit | NIL
NIL |

4. HOUSING ACT 1936 PART IV OVERCROWDING -

- | | |
|---|-----|
| (a) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year | NIL |
| (b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year | NIL |
| (c) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year | NIL |
| (d) Cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for abatement | NIL |

NEW HOUSES. No new houses were built during the year.

HOUSING ACT 1949 IMPROVEMENT GRANTS -

- | | |
|---|---|
| (a) Number of dwellings brought up to standard during the year | 6 |
| (b) Number of dwellings in respect of which schemes were approved during the year | 6 |

SECTION E INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

MILK - There are no dairies within the district which is served by outside retailers. Apart from Producer Retailers whose premises are inspected by other Authorities the bulk of milk consumed in the district is designated milk and the service appears very satisfactory.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS - There is one slaughterhouse in the district that falls short of modern standards. Discussion took place during the year with a view to improving the standard of the building. The owner of the slaughterhouse follows the practice of quality-buying only, with the result that in spite of the poor building the standard of meat sold in the retail shops is of the highest. In small rural areas the business of the small man who aims at quality is of value to the consumer and should not lightly be discarded in the interest of a centralised super slaughterhouse many miles away. All shops and vans where food is sold are kept in a clean state.

CARCASES INSPECTED DURING THE YEAR.

	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs	Horses
1. Number killed	249	NIL	1	1646	290	NIL
2. Number inspected	249	NIL	1	1646	290	NIL
3. All diseases except tuberculosis and cysticercosis						
(a) Whole carcasses condemned	NIL	NIL	NIL	1	NIL	NIL
(b) Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	15	NIL	NIL	166	5	NIL
(c) Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tubercu- losis and cysticercosis	6.0	NIL	NIL	10.1	1.7	NIL
4. Tuberculosis only						
(a) Whole carcasses condemned	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
(b) Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	3	NIL
(c) Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	1.0	NIL
5. Cysticercosis						
(a) Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
(b) Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
(c) Generalised and totally condemned	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

No meat marking scheme under Part III of the Public Health (Meat) Regulations 1924 is in force in the district.

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SECTION F INFECTIOUS DISEASE : CONTROL

Measles accounted for practically all of the notifications during the year. There were 81 cases mainly in the early part of the year. One case of pneumonia was also notified. There were no deaths due to infectious disease and as far as is known no serious complications or consequences.

POLIOMYELITIS VACCINATION. No cases of poliomyelitis occurred but the programme of vaccination against it proceeded as rapidly as possible. At the end of the year the statistics for the county showed that 81% of the children below 15 years had been registered for vaccination and of these 37% had had the complete course of inoculations and 61% an incompleted number leaving only 2% not yet treated. The response was very poor for other age groups however, only about 5% having registered. Of these about half had commenced the course of injections. At the time of writing this report the death of a well-known footballer had taken place due to poliomyelitis and, as a consequence of this well-publicised case, requests for vaccination from these age-groups poured in, so that a great improvement is likely to be shown in 1959.